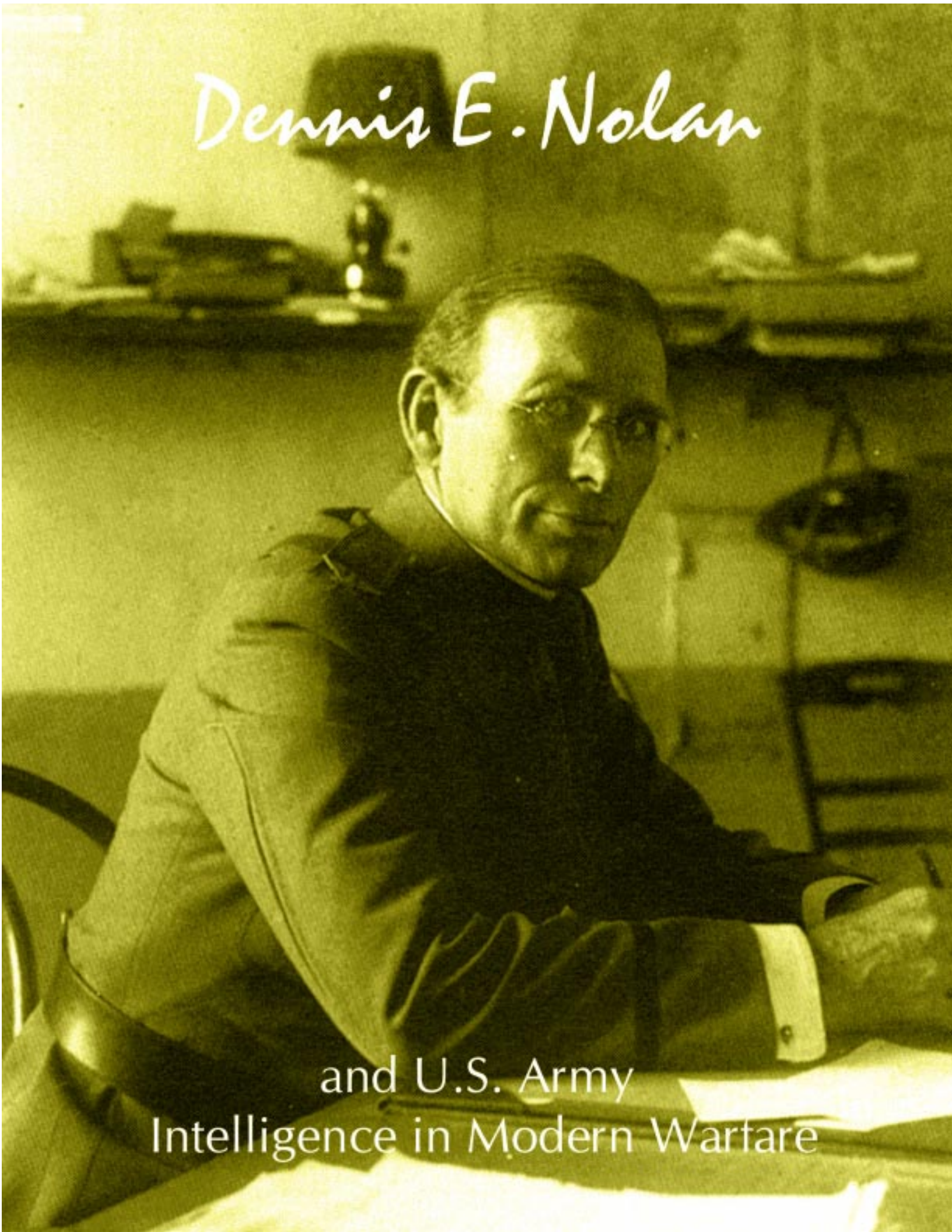
Dennis E. Nolan
and U.S. Army
Intelligence in Modern Warfare

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As the 20th century began to unfold, James Joyce was writing, "I hear an army charging upon the land." His verbal imagery was freighted with ominous portent. The new century would see warfare that was more brutal, more total and more technologically destructive than had ever before been witnessed in human history.

The new magazine rifle with its small bore and smokeless powder, along with the machine gun, had a telling effect on charging forces in the Boer War (1899-1902). In the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, a Russian radio operator ashore stumbled upon the implications of electronic warfare when he overheard Japanese fleet signals, correctly deduced that they were adjustments to the bombardment of naval guns, and jammed them with his spark transmitter. The Russo-Japanese War taught that offensive operations were still possible, but at high cost. The Japanese lost 50,000 men in the attack at Port Arthur and 70,000 during the 10-day siege of Mukden. But these wars were just full-dress rehearsals for the war that erupted 14 years into the century that was so all-encompassing that is was simply called "The World War."

When it became apparent that a power like the United States had responsibilities to its allies and could not avoid being drawn into the European conflict, its Army had a lot of catching up to do. That the U.S. Army of 1917 could hope to be anything other than casualties on the battlefields of France was the fortunate convergence of several factors. Enabling its success were the reforms instituted just after the turn of the century by Secretary of War Elihu Root, the mobilization dry-run conducted along the Mexican border from 1911 to 1916, the willingness to emulate all that was worthy in the professional military organizations of the British and French armies, and the leadership of John J. Pershing, his staff and field commanders.

One of the U.S. Army's awkward oversights up until this time was the lack of any intelligence structure interlacing its fighting echelons. Pershing wrote, "Before our entry into the war, European experience had shown that military operations can be carried out successfully and without unnecessary loss only in the light of complete and reliable information of the enemy."[1]

While Ralph Van Deman was organizing a workable Army-level intelligence unit back in Washington in 1917, an Irish American lad was facing a whole different set of challenges in France. As the man in charge of General John J. Pershing's intelligence for the American Expeditionary Forces, Dennis E. Nolan had to build an intelligence structure for combat forces in the field that would be responsive to the requirements of modern warfare and he had to do it fast under wartime conditions. It was a new test for the American Army. History has confirmed that he was the best man for the job.

The first born of Irish immigrants Martin Nolan and Honora Cunningham, Dennis Edward was born on 22 April 1872 in the village of Akron, New York, east of Buffalo in limestone country. His father had come from Ireland in those waves of young men fleeing famine and desperation. The elder Nolan met his wife in the United States and sought work in the limestone mines and kilns of Akron, eventually staking his newly husbanded fortune in a farm. The exertions of his youth did not allow for schooling and he was illiterate. Perhaps feeling its lack, he valued education and insisted upon a solid course

of study for all six of his children. Each of them would use their education as a means to a professional career. Dennis' brothers became respectively an Army officer and a medical doctor, and of his three sisters, two became school teachers and the other trained to be a nurse. During his high school years, Dennis taught at an elementary school for two years and seemed headed for Cornell University and a teaching career when one of those unexpected turns of chance diverted his ambitions. It was announced in 1892 that a vacant appointment to the U.S. Military Academy would be filled on the basis of a competitive exam. Nolan took the test and got the highest score. The process delayed his arrival on the campus. Missing the summer encampment, he joined the student body in September, earning for him the college sobriquet of "Sep."

At West Point he distinguished himself in athletics, playing left field for the baseball team and becoming an all-American football player at the end position. He took his cues from quarterback Malin Craig, the officer who would become the Army Chief of Staff on the eve of World War II. He graduated from the academy in 1896 and two years later the young infantry lieutenant found himself fighting the Spaniards in Cuba. He earned two Silver Star citations for his actions in the battles of El Caney where he served as Acting Assistant Adjutant General of the 2d Brigade of Henry W. Lawton's 2d Division, V Army Corps, where a Lieutenant Colonel named Arthur L. Wagner was performing intelligence work under fire. During the siege of Santiago, Nolan served as aide to General Chambers McKibben, commanding in Santiago.

From Cuba, Nolan shipped out for the Philippines in 1899 and accepted a temporary promotion to major in the 11th Volunteer Cavalry. He commanded a squadron of cavalry in the expeditionary brigade commanded by Brig. Gen. Theodore Schwann. In the operations between 4 January and 8 February 1900 in the provinces of Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, and Tayabas, he distinguished himself time and again. Schwann, formerly assigned to the Military Information Division in 1893 and a Medal of Honor winner, thought Nolan had "proved himself to be an officer of dash, enterprise and excellent judgment, and, although quite young in the service, has established a record for himself of which he may well be proud."[2] He was honorably discharged from the volunteers in March 1901 and reverted to his regular rank of captain.

Returning to the United States, he taught law and history at West Point before being assigned to the new general staff formed in 1903. Serving on that first general staff were a host of captains who would become general officers in the American Army. Among them were Captains Peyton C. March, John J. Pershing, Joseph T. Dickman, Benjamin Alvord, H.C. Hale, Charles H. Muir, Frank McIntyre, Charles T. Menoher, William G. Haan, Charles D. Rhodes, and Ralph Van Deman. An exceptional captain on that staff, Charles Young, would be denied any general's star because of his race. Another man on that staff who would not make it to general officer rank was Colonel Arthur L. Wagner, the chief of the Third Division (Operations) who would die in 1905 while his promotion to brigadier was being processed.

Next for Nolan were more assignments in the Philippines, first at Fort McKinley and then as an inspector in the constabulary, commanding the district of southern Luzon. After the Philippines he spent two years in Alaska with the 30th Infantry. He returned to a general staff

job in 1915 and was promoted to major the following year. Once again on the general staff, he worked for Army chief of staff Maj. Gen. Hugh L. Scott, making the Army's case for universal conscription which would be presented to Congress.[3]

When a Serbian patriot, chafing under Austria-Hungarian domination, shot the heir to the throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand in June 1914 in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzogovina, he precipitated a chain reaction that would plunge most of the world into war on a scale heretofore unglimpsed. Decades old alliances were invoked and nations fell into step with one side or another—Austria-Hungary, Germany and Turkey, the "Central Powers," and Serbia, Russia, France, Great Britain, and eventually the United States, the "Allied Powers."

The events in Europe were instilling a new urgency into the Army planners in Washington and the Army's brightest thinkers at the Army War College were considering the possibility of the entry of the United States into the general conflagration a continent away. Major Nolan was writing a staff study that laid out a plan for the Army to rely on universal conscription to augment its regular ranks with manpower. It received the approbation of Hugh Scott, the Chief of Staff, and Congress passed the Selective Service Act on 18 May 1917, six weeks after American entry into the war. Nolan's friend and colleague, Major Ralph Van Deman, was churning out memos too. His advocated the formation of a separate Military Intelligence Division within the War Department along British lines. His cause was less well received by the Chief of Staff and required more elaborate strategies to gain acceptance, a story that is told elsewhere.

While staff officers in Washington worked on their plans, a full-scale rehearsal for America's entry into the Great War was being conducted along the southwestern border of the United States. The Punitive Expedition in 1916 into Mexico in pursuit of the Mexican bandit/revolutionary Pancho Villa assembled nearly the whole of the American Army along with National Guards of 47 states in a large-scale maneuver that would test organization, tactics, logistics and command and control in a mostly non-lethal setting. The lessons Pershing learned about military intelligence in that confrontation predisposed him to place considerable emphasis on that emerging art in the years to follow.

The Great War, as it was known until it was realized that it was only the first in a series, was the curtain-raiser for general warfare in the age of technology. It introduced such concepts, now taken for granted, as barbed wire, steel helmets, tanks, aerial warfare, poison gas and its poor defense, the gask mask. There were telephones and radios, allowing an unprecedented span of command control. The field commanders could be better informed

by the front line commanders, and theoretically, vice versa. Airplanes made possible aerial reconnaissance and radios ushered in a future of electronic eavesdropping and the deception that goes with it.

It was the war that gave the military terms of *stalemate* and *attrition* a uniquely sanguine reality. The amount of fire that could be brought to bear with the improved, rapid-firing rifle, machine guns, artillery and mortars favored the defense and made unthinkable, after the Somme and Pachendale, offensive attacks over open ground against well fortified trenches. It was the kind of warfare that exacted terrible human costs in killed, wounded, and mentally shattered. More than 37 million fell into those categories as compared to about 2,000 killed or wounded in the Spanish-American War of 1898. The British alone lost 20,000 killed in a single day at the Battle of the Somme. The poet Philip Larkin, comparing the slaughter to previous conflicts that entailed a romantic notion of chivalry, declared that there would be "Never Such Innocence Again."

Provoked out of its isolationist shell by the German sinking of its ships, the United States entered the war on the side of the Allies in April 1917, although it would be almost a year before its military forces were assembled, trained, equipped, and in place along the entrenched front that ran from the North Sea across Belgium and France to the Swiss border. Despite the fact that the American forces only fought in the last year of four years of carnage and suffered only about one-tenth of the casualties, it did perform with an impressive elan and professionalism, surprising in view of its small officers corps and its limited experience. Some would credit the AEF's entry into the fray with its fresh troops and enviable industrial support as tipping the balance in favor of the allies. Much of the credit goes to the leadership of Pershing and his handpicked staff who truly transformed the American Army in the space of several months from an Indian-fighting constabulary to a 2.3-million-man combat machine worthy of the industrial age.

One of Pershing's top staffers is the subject of this biographical sketch. When America's imminent entry into the war became apparent, many Army officers were clamoring for interviews in Washington that might land them coveted positions in the American Expeditionary Force. Nolan was not one to push himself forward. So, he was surprised by his being named to Pershing's staff. Nolan remembered how he had learned of his selection:

> "Several days after Major Harbord had established his office in the State, War, and Navy Building he called me on the telephone and invited me to come to his house that night for dinner, specifying that he

> preferred I come after dark in order that no might know of my visit. When I arrived he informed me I had been selected to head the Intelligence Section of the General Staff and that I would report to him in the morning for duty in organizing my part of the expedition. …I was surprised and delighted to go with Harbord as Chief of Staff for I had served with him and under him for four years in the Philippine Constabulary…. It was my opinion then as it is now that General Pershing could not have made a better selection for his first Chief of Staff than Harbord. I told Major Harbord so that night as we drank to the health of the American Expeditionary Force."[4]

As a major, Nolan was one of the original members of Pershing's General Staff that sailed to France aboard on the *U.S.S. Baltic*.[5] He had worked for Pershing before, as adjutant of the brigade Pershing commanded at Fort McKinley in the Philippines, and again was hand picked by Pershing for a job in his Philippine Constabulary force. The commander-in-chief of American Expeditionary Forces selected Nolan again to be Chief of the Intelligence Section "because," he said, "of his knowledge of organization and his initiative."[6]

Nolan turned to the British and the French for models. As soon as he arrived in France, he observed the operations of the French Intelligence Service at French General Headquarters, at the Third French Army headquarters at Noyon, and at the headquarters of the French XI Corps and the 35th Division. During the major British offensive near Ypres from 28 July to 5 August 1917, Nolan studied the operation of the British Intelligence Service. At the battle of Malmaison in late October 1917, he studied French intelligence units in action. He continued his study of intelligence in action by spending two weeks with the American 1st Division when it entered the Toul sector and was with the U.S. 2d Division during its attack on Vaux on 2 July 1918.

The Baker Board was a military mission to England and France in June and July 1917 charged with making observations that could be used in the organization, training transportation, operations, supply and administration of American forces. At the General Staff of the British War Office, the board learned that, since the war began, the British intelligence section mushroomed from about 12 men to three or four thousand stationed all over the world. Their duties involved gathering "information about the enemy; topographical information, location of the enemy forces; dissemination of this information to the proper persons; secret service work; production of maps; press censorship; and collection of intelligence regarding the economic situation in Germany." The observers at once realized that it would be impossible to staff an American intelligence service with officers from the regular army, there not being enough of them that could be spared. General Charteris, the head of the British Intelligence Bureau, advised them that "some officers for this work should come from the Regular Army, some from secret service men, some from policemen, and many from bright young men who could be tried out for this work." The board thought that "a number of the young men now in training camps can be found who can speak French, and a proportion German, who would be particularly valuable for intelligence work with our forces in France."[7] With the demand for trained intelligence officers exceeding the supply, an U.S. Army officers were sent to the British Intelligence School at Harrow, England, until an American facility could be set up in Langres, France. Before 1918, there was no technical training for intelligence offic-

ers. The American Expeditionary Force in France recognized this deficiency and cabled the War Department to ask that intelligence officers be sent to France ahead of their division's sailing date so that they could attend a special intelligence training course. Initially, the course consisted of a quick visit to the front lines, then enrollment at the AEF General Staff College in Langres, France.

The U.S. Army Intelligence School at Langres began its operation on July 25, 1918, with Major Thom Catron as director. Because of his experience, Catron would serve successive tours as ACofS, G2, at First Army and VII Corps. He would become the editor of the *Infantry Journal* between wars. The school's faculty was international in flavor, with one British and two French officers on the staff. With about 11 instructors in all, they taught two six-week classes and one eight-week class, averaging 46 students each, for 46.5 hours a week, Monday through Saturday, and sometimes Sunday. The demand for enrollment far exceeded the number of spaces available because of the demand in the field for trained intelligence officers.

Dennis E. Nolan described in his final report the three main courses of instruction at Langres: "First, the detailed study of the German army, its organization, recruiting system, strength and location of its units and all matters that would help an Intelligence officer to visualize the enemy's forces; second, the examination of prisoners and documents; third, topography, and the study, interpretation and restitution of airplane photographs."[8]

To give the students a rounded though admittedly superficial grounding in military basics, they were also taught about American and allied organization and tactics.

Nolan asked Van Deman for 50 sergeants with investigative experience and the ability to speak French. This became the nucleus of the Corps of Intelligence Police (CIP) organized in August 1917. Nolan was given the authority to attach members of the intelligence police to field units and give them a monthly stipend for quarters of $15. They would also receive a $2 per diem rate for rations, since it was not practicable to assign them to any organization for subsistence. It would hamper their investigative operations. The CIP had 750 agents in France, where they were headquartered near Bordeaux, and 500 in the United States. They would be cut back to 28 in the year following the armistice.

One of the first orders of business for the American Expeditionary Force was to establish an awareness of operational security. In July 1917 Nolan had a general order read to each American unit and posted upon regimental and company bulletin boards during training. It said in part:

No officer, enlisted man or civilian employee will discuss orally or in writing with any person whatever, except when necessary in the line of duty, any matter referring to the movements, number or morale of the American troops or their allies, the intention of their commander, state of their supplies, the location of troops, depots or other utilities, or the extent of casualties. He must never mention his unit in connection with the place where it is stationed, nor the organization to which it belongs. …In other words, all officers and men are to limit their conversations about these subjects to such as are necessary in the performance of duty, and are to have no other conversations about them whatsoever; to cultivate the habit of reticence and the keeping of their own counsel, particularly regarding matters with which they are not directly concerned, and to impress upon their subordinates the necessity of doing the same.[9]

Nolan and his colleagues on the general staff in Paris began to work on a Tables of Organization for the AEF general headquarters and by December 1917 sent off their draft to the War Department. It showed an Intelligence Section (G-2) in the General Headquarters, General Staff, with 11 officers, 34 enlisted men, and 298 "Soldiers

from other sources," presumably the Corps of Intelligence Police. These tables were approved by the War Department in February 1918 with some minor changes. By this time the General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, were located at Chaumont.[10]

In Nolan's final report assembled after the war, he reviewed some of the principles that guided him in the pursuit of intelligence duties. The office was designed "to gain, analyze and distribute military information of the enemy; to interpret it for use in war plans and combat orders; and to protect its own forces against enemy Intelligence activity." Intelligence officers, a relatively new breed in the U.S. Army, were expected to become thoroughly knowledgeable about the enemy, his "organization, tactics, habits and modes of thought" so that they could present the "point of view of the enemy opposite them." Using the information gathered by their intelligence agencies, they would deduce enemy intentions and prepare themselves "to assist in the preparation of plans for operations by their ability to point out the effect that the enemy's dispositions, defensive organizations or intentions would have on them." This would be done in written summaries or at daily staff meetings at corps, army, or higher headquarters in which the Intelligence officer would have the opportunity to present a review of the enemy situation over the last 24 hours and answer any questions put to him. This does not sound very different from the overall purpose of intelligence as described in today's field manuals.[11]

Nolan's intelligence organization was to be reflected in each headquarters from that of the AEF, down through armies and corps, to regimental and, finally, battalion levels, so that each echelon would be self-sufficient in gathering intelligence along their own front and be able to draw their own conclusions. After briefing their own commander, each unit would send the information both up the chain of command and to adjacent headquarters where it would be integrated into a bigger picture.

At the lowest level, each battalion would have an intelligence officer and a detachment of 28 enlisted men, including 15 scouts, eleven observers and two chief snipers. The scouts would go out with patrols to take prisoners or observe enemy activity. Others would man observation posts in forward areas. Nolan realized that it was the frontline intelligence detachments that were vital to the system as a whole. It was an intelligence patrol that marked the first American action reported in G2 communiques. On 12 May 1918, three intelligence service scouts came upon a German fortification manned by 18 soldiers. In the ensuing firefight, "They shot four of whom one appeared to be an officer, secured valuable papers and retired under heavy fire."[12]

Back at the regiment, an intelligence officer and eight enlisted observers would use listening-in sets, especially where trench warfare guaranteed the time to devote to their installation and operation. They would pass their intelligence information along to an artillery liaison officer.

There was no intelligence organization prescribed at brigade level, although many brigade commanders improvised ad hoc intelligence organizations.

In a division headquarters, an Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, had the responsibility for "Military Information and conduct of Combat Intelligence, which constituted the greater part of his work; Map Reproduction and Distribution; and Counter-espionage." He was assisted in this by an assistant for Military Information, a topographical officer and one commissioned interpreter, along with the requisite number of clerks. He had his own observation posts and access to the observation balloons and observation posts of the artillery information service of the divisional artillery from both his own division, neighboring divisions and higher headquarters. It was at the divi-

sion that prisoners and captured documents were gathered for the first time after their capture. Prisoners were interrogated for tactical information that might affect the division and then sent on to corps.

At the corps level, the scope of intelligence gathering was expanded, adding the tools of aerial reconnaissance and photography, corps observation posts, the corps artillery information service, balloons and flash and sound ranging sections. Prisoners were interrogated in more depth than at division. Relying on aerial photography, they made and updated topographical maps. The corps was responsible for collecting information from their immediate front to a depth of five miles. Beyond that would be the job of the Army headquarters.

In the Army headquarters, the intelligence section devoted itself to strategy rather than tactics and concentrated more on interpreting the mass of information sent in from the lower levels. Here estimates were prepared of the enemy's situation, plans and intentions. Intelligence personnel looked into economic, political and morale aspects of the enemy, as well as questioning prisoners at greater length.

The field army headquarters had a radio intelligence section working on decoding and translating enemy messages. Intercept was done by a Signal Corps radio section at GHQ in Chaumont, using a combination of direction-finding equipment, listening posts, and induction coils placed near enemy ground lines. Communications security was undertaken by the Signal Corps.

A Radio Intelligence Subsection was created under the American Expeditionary Force G-2 early in 1917 under Major Frank Moorman, long before the first American fighting forces would arrive. Cooperating with their French and British allies counterparts, they prepared for the coming joint operations.

When the American First Army arrived in France, a three-man Radio Intelligence Subsection was formed on 12 June 1918 with "Code" and "Goniometric" (Direction Finding) sections. Commanded by First Lieutenant Charles H. Matz, it was enlarged to three officers and eight men by the armistice. The First Army Radio Intelligence Subsection was responsible for analyzing and translating communications intercepted by the Signal Corps radio intelligence operators, and locating enemy radio stations based on bearings plotted by Signal Corps "gonio" operators. These Signal Corps radio intelligence personnel had arrived in France in December 1917 and had undergone training enabling them to intercept messages at the rate of 25 words per minute and to translate 15 words per minute from the German. All of their intercept, direction-finding, or wire-tap stations were tied into the division Radio Intelligence Subsection.

The goniometric teams used the portable SCR-83 radio receiving sets with six-foot-square antennas. Two stations could triangulate signals transmitted by enemy radios and pinpoint their locations. By analyzing traffic and combining that information with direction-finding, they could determine the depth of the enemy echelons and compile a daily order of battle.

To underscore the importance of his Radio Intelligence subsection, Nolan picked out this example of good intelligence organization saving American lives:

> All of the documents captured naturally did not refer to tactics. Among those of special importance are code books and lists of code names of places and units. These radically helped the work of the Radio Intelligence subsections. A message in code was intercepted at 9:05 p.m. on April 28. This message ordered an attack for 1 a.m. on American troops. It went through routine intelligence channels, was decoded and warning of the impending attack reached the troops thirty minutes before it was actually delivered. Without a well-organized system for copying, transmitting, and decoding these messages, the information would have been too late to be useful. It is to be noted that in this case, as in all others, the Signal Corps operator who intercepted the message had no knowledge of the important

nature of its contents.[13]

Finally, at Nolan's headquarters, the GHQ, AEF, the Second (Intelligence) Division was divided into four divisions. They were the Military Information Section, G-2-a, headed by Col. A. L. Conger, which included subsections for order of battle, enemy defensive organizations, artillery, wireless interception, codes and ciphers, aviation, economic, and publications. One of the keys to piecing together the German defensive positions was the interpretation of aerial photographs.

The publications subsection put out several key intelligence documents: A secret Summary of Intelligence that was intended for the general staff and reported on military, political and economic events; a confidential Summary of Information that told field commanders about the situation along the front; a classified Press Review that followed public opinion trends; a usually secret Summary of Air Intelligence that kept the Army Air Corps abreast of aviation developments; and official communiques and cablegrams for the War Department back in the United States. Pershing credited the weekly summary of events prepared by the Intelligence Section with remarkable accuracy "in drawing conclusions and in forecasting conditions."[14]

A Secret Service Section, G-2-b, under Col. W. O. Reed and, later, Col A. B. Coxe, was given the job of espionage and counterespionage or the suppression of enemy agents. Nolan had far-reaching plans for his intelligence network, extending it beyond the collection of battlefield intelligence. He wanted his G-2 to reach beyond the front in France and Belgium and collect strategic intelligence from theaters in Italy and Macedonia, places where the AEF might be expected to fight later in the war. For this purpose he formed a G-2 Secret Service unit which also had a counterespionage staff with stations in neutral countries. Heading the espionage section was Lt. Col. Nicholas W. Campanole who had been one of Pershing's intelligence officers in the 1916 Punitive Expedition into Mexico. While it may have infringed upon the prerogatives of the Military Intelligence Branch of the War Department, Nolan thought it imperative to have this in-house capability.

The Topographic, Map Supply, and Sound and Flash Ranging Section, G-2-c, performed the duties its name implies. It was directed by Col. R. G. Alexander, a scholar, second in his class at West Point, who would spend the rest of his career as a professor at the academy, becoming the dean as a brigadier general. A large base printing plant was maintained in Langres by the 29th Engineers and mobile printing trains mounted on trucks were used to keep armies and corps up to date with maps. Over 5 million maps were printed between July and November 1918.

Lastly, the Censorship and Press Section, G-2-d, under Lt. Col. William C. Sweeney, took care of postal and telegraphic censorship, press censorship, propaganda, and the publications of an AEF newspaper. Having the department responsible for keeping the Army's secrets also charged with releasing information to the press was not a sound idea. It would foster distrust and hamper Army press relations in the years to come.

The Censorship and Press Section supervised eight Army artists in the theater. The propaganda subsection bombarded German troop concentrations with 3 million propaganda leaflets which were delivered by balloon, plane and infantry patrols. In order to keep the morale of the troops at a "high pitch," Nolan approved the proposal of 2d Lieut. Guy T. Viskniskki that he edit an official paper of the AEF. The first issue of the *Stars and Stripes* came out on 8 February 1918 and the circulation grew to more than 500,000 by war's end. Pershing concluded that no other factor "could have done more to sustain the morale of the AEF than the *Stars and Stripes*.[15]

One area of modern intelligence, the compilation of codes and ciphers to safeguard friendly communications, was left out of Nolan's organization. That work would be undertaken by the Code Compilation Section under the AEF's chief signal officer. The distribution of the codes, however, was performed by the Radio Intelligence Section of the AEF G2.

Liaison was kept up throughout the war with the allies and proved beneficial to all. Nolan believed that none of the allies "could, even for its own troops and front, operate efficiently without the aid and cooperation of all of the intelligence services. Individually, their accomplishments could have but limited scope and value; together, working in close touch and harmony and with pooled resources, they formed a combination which at all times supplied their commanders, staffs, and troops with the information that was necessary for the intelligent decision of military questions, great or small." The Intelligence Service also shared its information with the U.S. Army Air Service, the Signal Corps and Engineers.[16]

In August and December 1917 respectively, Nolan had published and issued to the troops the *Regulations for the Intelligence Section, General Staff*, and the *Instructions for Regimental Intelligence Service*. These documents spelled out the organization and principles discussed above. The latter manual described the role of the regimental intelligence officer as an active one. "He does not wait for information, but goes after it, visiting the units of the first line as often as possible and particularly verifying the accuracy of observations." It also knowledgeably warned against detailing the intelligence officer to other, distracting duties.[17] In January 1918 a table of equipment was prescribed for regimental intelligence. In addition to a lot of drafting equipment, it included items peculiar to the intelligence craft, such as stereoscopes and other "Aero Photo Interpreting Equipment," motorcycles with sidecars, bicycles, field safes, observation telescopes, field glasses, flag signalling kits, map reproduction equipment, and a periscopic goniometer.

The Intelligence Section at the General Headquarters was officially organized by General Order 8, 5 July 1917. It was actually up and running by August 1917. In a diary entry for 8 February 1918, Pershing noted: "Visited Intelligence Section to-day, under Colonel Nolan; find it well organized."[18]

Seventeen years after the war, Nolan recalled a typical day for him at the General Headquarters:

> The day formally started with a conference in the office of the Chief of Staff at 9:00, of the Assistant Chiefs of Staff, the Adjutant General, the Inspector General and the Judge Advocate General, at which each Assistant Chief of Staff, in turn, explained verbally the activity of his division during the preceding 24 hours. To make preparations for this conference, I usually reached the office between 8 and 8:30, looked over the Intelligence documents in print that I had OK'd the evening before, and marking in blue pencil the particular paragraphs or a particular reproduced captured document that General Pershing should read in person. In the staff conference I briefly summarized the action of the German Armies on the Western Front the preceding 24 hours. Immediately after this conference, which rarely lasted longer than a half hour, I went across the hall to the General's office and made the same statement to him, pointing out on his map the changes that had taken place in the distribution of the German troops the preceding 24 hours and calling his attention to captured documents that were published with the Summary of Information or Summary of Intelligence that involved new methods of warfare or change or restatement of the German tactical doctrine. During the day the General read these documents and made any comment he had to make on the following morning. Ordinarily, unless he sent for me, I saw neither himself nor the Chief of Staff during the

remainder of the day. The only exception was when an important communique during the battle, which he should see before being issued by my section, was taken to him about 9:00 in the evening to O.K.

Immediately following the conference with the General, I had a conference with my four Chiefs of divisions and my executive officer in which I gave them a resume of what the other Assistant Chiefs of Staff had said at the conference with the Chief of Staff, the resume I had given at that conference, and any reaction of the Commander-in-Chief to what my own section was doing. If any of the division chiefs had business to transact with me, it was done at this conference. If it merely affected his own section and the others had no particular interest in it, they were excused and I handled the problem with him then and there. That was the last opportunity of the day unless an emergency came up for them to take up my time with their problems. Of course, immediately following, I took up with the Executive Officer the routine administration, and by 12:00, when we went to lunch, all administrative routine for the day had been finished. I refused to see anybody during the forenoon, but reserved the early part of the afternoon for appointments, frequently seeing French officials from Paris, American officials, diplomatic corps people and others who came to G.H.Q. on business that touched on the Intelligence service and other matters of the staff outside of Intelligence. Usually these conferences terminated by 4:30, and I began going over the information that had come in during the day regarding the German Army and passing on items to be included in the summaries, concluding, if possible, by 6:30, when we adjourned for dinner. Immediately after dinner and not later than 8:00, the group returned to the section and the final OK was put on the data to go in the Summary of Information and the Summary of Intelligence, the daily cable to the War Department was completed and the communique, as a rule, between 9 and 9:30, issued to the press, was telephoned to our press headquarters which released all dispatches. It should be remembered when great battles are in progress, information regarding the actual results of the day don't begin to come in at G.H.Q. until very late in the afternoon or early in the evening; the bulk of the information you get in anywhere from 6 to 12:00 at night. Those are the intense hours of work in an Intelligence day and determine largely what you are going to disseminate as information in your bulletins the following day. Usually this work was finished by 11:30 or 12 o'clock, when all except the night shift leave the building for their billets.[19]

On the 27th of May, the Germans attacked across the Aisne in a 30-division force, taking the French by surprise and inflicting a costly defeat upon them. Pershing said in his memoirs that "it was the opinion of our Intelligence Section that the next blow would logically fall upon that part of the line and that view was expressed to the French by my Chief of Intelligence, Brigadier General Nolan." It is not surprising that the French paid no attention to Nolan's briefing as they had little faith in the American Army's seasoning.

The lessons Nolan learned in the World War were set down with conviction in his final report. He wrote that:

Experience in the American Expeditionary Forces has amply borne out the axiom that military operations can be carried out successfully and without unnecessary losses only in the light of the most complete and reliable information of the enemy. Experience has also proven that this object can be attained only by means of a carefully organized system for obtaining, coordinating, studying and disseminating such information, and for assisting in the preparation of military plans by applying the information on hand to the operation under consideration.

The difficulties of building up a system like that which has been described have shown beyond all doubt that great attention

must in the future be paid to training in this important phase of General Staff work. It has been amply demonstrated, not only that the General Staff officers concerned with intelligence must be well-trained, but also that the whole group of General Staff officers must have an adequate conception of this particular staff function. This is equally and especially true of the commanders of all units.[20]

The AEF G2 considered that the goal of U.S. Army intelligence was "to describe the enemy's forces, to determine the location of his units, discover his intentions, and where and when he would carry them out. In addition to this, intelligence warned our own troops of how the enemy would act and, when it was possible, why."[21]

How well the Intelligence Service met expectations was evaluated by Nolan.

As the time approached for the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensive operations, our intelligence service which had had such a long and excellent practice, especially in the higher staffs, was prepared to take over a sector of the front. It was most important to the Allies, as a whole, as well as to ourselves, that our work in this respect should be good, as, if it were not, it would greatly prejudice the success of the work of their own intelligence sections.

The Intelligence Section at General Headquarters studied the defensive organization of the St. Mihiel salient for months prior to the issuing of the orders by the operations section for that offensive. This information was sent to our First Army, which, having been recently organized at another part of the front, had not its own data. The information was there carefully analyzed and applied to the preparation of the operations plans of that army. Each corps and division staff assigned to the attack, as it took its place in line, was furnished with the information pertinent to its front, and the study and analysis was continued down to the lowest unit.

Where information of the manner occupying the sector was insufficient, the necessary steps were taken to complete it, such as, for instance, the ordering of a raid at the request of the Army Intelligence Section for the identification of certain units whose presence and disposition had not recently been verified.

The Army Intelligence Section issued studies describing the terrain, the enemy's defensive organization, the detailed method of occupation of sectors, histories of the enemy's divisions that would be engaged, studies on the length of time that would be required by the enemy to bring up reserves, and such other data as appeared suitable or were specifically requested. Large and small scale maps and vertical and oblique aerial photographs of the terrain that it would cross were issued to each organization down to platoons. When the attack was launched, every officer and soldier participating in it knew, so far as could be known exactly, what he would encounter during the advance.[22]

This attention to detail was typical of AEF intelligence work in subsequent campaigns. One indication of the value of the Intelligence Service occurred at the battle of Saint Mihiel in September 1918 when American commanders, believing the Germans to have withdrawn from the salient, considered sending up the infantry without artillery support. Goniometric stations warned that all the enemy radio stations were still operating in their former positions, a solid indicator the enemy was still there. General John Pershing decided to attack only after a four-hour artillery preparation, thus saving the lives of considerable infantrymen. In that same battle, SIGINT alerted the Americans to a German counterattack, giving the strength and exact time three hours before it was launched.

Nolan not only designed and built the American Army's intelligence machinery, he kept it well oiled. He gave most of the credit, however, for its smooth running to his staff and the rank and file of the Intelligence Service. He concluded his final report with these

accolades.

The wide range of subjects covered by the General Headquarters Intelligence Section was such as to make a high degree of decentralization of responsibility essential to success. For this reason, the Chiefs of Division exercised a great deal of initiative and responsibility in carrying out approved policies affecting their divisions. These officers, Col. A. L. Conger and Col. J.R. Thomas, Jr., who succeeded him after the Armistice, Col. R. G. alexander, Col. A.B. Coxe, Col. W. C. Sweeney and Col. Bruce Magruder, the Executive Officer of the Section, rendered efficient and distinguished services in the performance of the responsible duties.

The success of the Intelligence Section at General Headquarters, as indicated in the preceding pages of this report, depended largely on the excellent work done in the Intelligence Sections of the armies, army corps, divisions, regiments, and battalions, and of the Services of Supplies, General Staff.

In closing this report, I wish to commend and make of record the faithful, intelligent, and never-ceasing efforts of the officers, soldiers, and clerks who composed the Intelligence Service in the American Expeditionary Forces in all units, and, further, to record my conviction that by their devotion to duty they contributed their full share to the great successes gained by our troops in battle.[23]

He received a temporary promotion to brigadier general on 8 August 1918. In September 1918, Pershing approved a request by the commander of the 28th Division to have Nolan temporarily transferred there to command the 55th Brigade, replacing an inefficient officer. It was in one way a measure of Pershing's confidence in the military abilities of his intelligence officer.[24] In fact, in September the 28th Division began to look a lot like the old AEF G2 shop with Conger taking command of the 56th Brigade and Sweeney becoming the division chief of staff. Providing intelligence for this division back at the IV Corps headquarters was Lt. Col. Joseph Stilwell.

Nolan arrived just after the Meuse-Argonne offensive began. For his extraordinary heroism in action near Apremont on 1 October 1918, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. The citation read:

While the enemy was preparing a counter-attack, which they preceded by a terrific barrage, General Nolan made his way into the town of Apremont, and personally directed the movements of his tanks, under a most harassing fire of enemy machine guns, rifles and artillery. His indomitable courage and coolness so inspired his forces, that about 400 of our troops repulsed an enemy attack of two German regiments.[25]

A lieutenant who worked for Nolan in the 28th Division expressed his respect for his boss, relating that, "General Nolan worked out the defense of Apremont before the German counterattack, then in the thickest of the fight he came out and joined us." Another of Nolan's subordinates at the time recalled that, "While we were up there fighting we saw him going from shell hole to shell hole, never bending his head. This is what gives men grit. I never saw the general we had before outside of the dugout, the new one was always leading us."[26]

General Pershing awarded him the Distinguished Service Medal in January 1919 which credited him with organizing and administering "with marked ability" the Intelligence Section of the General Staff of the American Expeditionary Forces. It said, "His estimates of the complex and ever-changing military and political situations, his sound judgment and accurate discrimination were invaluable to the government, and influenced greatly the success that attended the

operations of the American Armies in Europe."[27]

Perhaps just as telling was the division commander's recommendation that he be considered for promotion to major general. Maj. Gen. Charles H. Muir remarked that, during the fighting around Apremont, "General Nolan demonstrated to my satisfaction that not only did he possess the theoretical qualifications for a Division Commander, but that he was a leader of men and able to obtain from them the extreme efforts frequently necessary to carry operations to a successful conclusion."[28] Muir asked to keep Nolan on under his command, pending his advancement, as one of his brigade commanders.

After the armistice, Nolan was detailed to the peace conference and charged with preparing a draft of the disarmament agreement with Germany. He came back to the U.S. in July 1919 to direct a course in military intelligence at the Army War College located in Washington, D.C. The man who had given up on a teaching career as a new high school grad in favor of a military commitment, now found himself a course director at the Army War College, the Army's premier post-graduate education institution.

When the director of military intelligence on the War Department General Staff, Marlborough Churchill, became ill, Nolan stepped into that position. He served as Director of Military Intelligence, WDGS, from 1 September 1920 to 8 August 1921. Col. Stuart Heintzelman replaced Nolan 23 August 1921, and became the first to hold the newly designated title of Assistant Chief of Staff, G2.

While serving as the intelligence director, Nolan strongly advocated the formation of a military intelligence reserve component within the Officers Reserve Corps that was created by the National Defense Act of 1920. Before the National Defense Act could be actually enacted, intelligence officers were given commissions in the Quartermaster Corps Reserve with the notation of "for intelligence duty" made in their files. This proved unsatisfactory for a number of reasons. Clerical omissions resulted in intelligence officers being mobilized for quartermaster assignments. With his experience in putting together a wartime intelligence apparatus, Nolan foresaw the need in any future conflict for a separate, trained and ready cadre of intelligence personnel that could be expanded. Remembering how handicapped U.S. Army intelligence was in the prewar days, he wrote, "My fear is that in the pressure of many things, claiming time for training, our Army may lapse into the pre-war days in its attitude toward the whole question of combat intelligence and that information regarding the enemy for our tactical problems and in our maneuvers will be based on the old and easy assumption that all information needed of the enemy is obtained from an enemy inhabitant."[29] As a result of his determination, the Military Intelligence Officers Reserve Corps came into being in August 1921.[30]

Another important accomplishment as Director of Military Intelligence was Nolan's insistence that the Corps of Intelligence Police be retained after the war. He argued that:

> Small bodies of highly trained men are absolutely necessary for the purpose of combating the activities of Mexican Agents on the Southern Border and the persistent efforts of various radical groups operating for the express purpose of destroying the morale of the personnel of the military establishment by spreading propaganda, advocating and encouraging mutiny, unions of Soldiers and Sailors and disobedience of authority among enlisted men of the Army, generally, as shown by the files of the Military Intelligence Division.[31]

The result was that the Secretary of War authorized 45 sergeants to be kept on the Detached Enlisted Men's List and detailed as intelligence police at various Corps Area and Department Headquarters. While not amounting to much as an effective counterintelligence corps

in the postwar years, the Counter Intelligence Police were kept alive as an organizational entity and would reemerge in World War II as the Counterintelligence Corps.

Receiving his permanent promotion to brigadier general in April 1921, he was sent the following September to command an artillery brigade in the 2d Infantry division and eventually command the division.

It was back to the War Department in 1924, this time as Acofs, G4. In September he became Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army. He was promoted to major general in January 1925 and headed to Geneva, Switzerland, to become chief of the Army representation of the War Department with the Preparatory Commission for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. He led the American effort to establish a clearer definition of what constituted armaments.

In May 1927, Nolan was named to command the V Corps Area headquartered at Fort Hayes in Columbus, Ohio. In December 1931 he moved to New York to command the II Corps Area. He would spend the next several interwar years riding in parades, supporting the Military Intelligence Reserve Society in New York, and becoming the Army's senior corps area commander.

At age 64 he reached the Army's mandatory retirement age. At a banquet in honor of his 40 years service, the man who had to deal with the woeful state of U.S. Army intelligence before America's entry into World War I showed himself to be still concerned with the question of readiness which has plagued the U.S. Army at so many crucial points in its history. He rose to declare, "Preparedness is the best defense against war and is the best solution for the problem of war." In 1936 he had not forgotten the problems of organizing U.S. forces for war in 1917 and his warning would have even more urgency within just five years.

To the strains of *Auld Lang Syne* played by the 16th Infantry regimental band, he left Governor's Island and command of the Second Army Corps on 30 April 1936, going into retirement at the Blackstone Hotel in New York City. He lived there with his wife, Julia, until his death in February 1956 at age 83. He and his wife, who died 12 years later, are buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Pershing held Nolan in high esteem, remarking upon the occasion of the latter's retirement that "the importance [of intelligence] can hardly be overestimated. The successful operation of an army in the field depends upon the accuracy of its information regarding the situation and probable intentions of the enemy. General Nolan carefully studied the systems in vogue in the Allied armies and selected the best features of each, with the result that no army was better served by its intelligence bureau than was our own."[32] Other commanders of combat units in World War I paid tribute to Nolan's intelligence section, saying that it functioned "so perfectly as to make our work easy."

Dennis Nolan would have been a leader for any time, with his military competency, his ability to improvise means to attain ends, and, most importantly, his judgment of the steel of his subordinates. The American Army was fortunate to have him at that critical time when it was plunged into the crucible of modern warfare. Its intelligence apparatus emerged case-hardened for the repeated infernos of the 20th century.

Notes

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p. 22.

2. Remarks contained in "Nolan Papers," U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command History Office, Fort Belvoir, VA.

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4. *The Life and Times of MG Dennis E. Nolan, 1872-1956, The Army's First G2*, History Office, Office of the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, 1998, pp. 23-24.

5. Pershing, John J., *My Experiences in the World War*, Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York, 1931, Vol. 1, p. 20.

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12. *United States Army in the World War…,* Vol. 13, p. 145.

13. *The United States Army in the World War…,* Vol. 13, p. 20.

14. Pershing, p. 187.

15. Pershing, p. 318.

16. *The United States Army in the World War…,* Vol. 13, p. 12.

17. *Instructions for Regimental Intelligence Service,* prepared by Intelligence Section, General Staff, Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, France, December 1917, p. 11, 6.

18. Pershing, p. 317.

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20. *The United States Army in the World War…,* Vol. 13, pp. 11-12.

21. *Ibid.,* p. 13.

22. *Ibid.,* p. 13.

23. *Ibid.,* p. 21.

24. Pershing, p. 294.

25. Letter, from Commanding General, 28th Division, to Brigadier General Dennis E. Nolan, 55th Infantry Brigade, Subject: Decoration, dated 10 March 1919, in the "Nolan Papers," U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command History Office, Fort Belvoir, VA.

26. *The Life and Times of MG Dennis E. Nolan, 1872-1956, The Army's First G2*, History Office, Office of the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, 1998, p. 35.

27. Letter, from The Adjutant General, American E.F., to Briga-

dier General Dennis E. Nolan, U.S. Army, Subject: Distinguished Service Medal, dated 8 January 1919, in the "Nolan Papers," Intelligence and Security Command History Office, Fort Belvoir, Va.

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